

MARKET HARBOROUGH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

1.

ANNUAL REPORT OF MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH AND
SANITARY INSPECTOR FOR 1943.

Gentlemen,

As requested by the Ministry of Health we present to you an abridged report for the year 1943, without reference to wartime industrial or military undertakings, and with statistics in the form of an appendix not for publication.

Area (in acres)...	4,771
Population (1943)...	10,400
Number of inhabited houses...	2,943
Rateable value...	£65,080
Sum represented by penny rate...	£261

Industries. These, in the main, retain their pre-war character, though, in some cases, there have been changes due to the war.

Population. As a reception area the population has increased somewhat; last year the number dropped materially owing to rehabilitation but during 1943 it has only decreased slightly.

Hostels & requisitioned houses. These are distributed throughout the town for evacuated persons.

Day Nursery. The nursery built by the Ministry last year for the children of mothers who go to work, is much appreciated and is admirably managed by matron and her staff. The staff consists of Matron, 1 deputy matron, 1 warden and 7 assistants. The nursery will accommodate 48 children and the average daily attendance has been 24, with a maximum of 36. The children are under periodic medical supervision and there have been no serious epidemics during the year.

Social Centre. This centre for evacuated women is open daily and is provided with facilities for washing, needlework, baths and recreation. It is not in so much demand as in previous years.

The Birth Rate is still rising and is again higher than the previous year.

The Death Rate is lower than last year.

The Infant Mortality Rate is considerably lower than in 1942.

Puerperal Fever. There were no cases during the year nor was there any death from a child-birth cause.

Causes of Death. Amongst the causes of death at all ages were:-

Cancer ...	21
Stroke ...	7
Heart disease...	26
Pneumonia...	4
Tuberculosis...	9

There was no death due to road accidents.
Deaths from:-

Measles...	0
Whooping Cough ...	1
Diarrhoea (under 2)	1

Laboratory Facilities. Laboratory examinations carried out in the County Council Laboratory included:-

Milk examinations (bacteriological) ...	52
Swabs for Diphtheria... ..	16
Sputa for T.B.	46
Sewage and Water analysis..	46
Urine (bacteriological) ...	7
Urine (for T.B.)... ..	7
Films for Gonococci ...	5
Blood for Wasserman ...	4
Milk... ..	7

Ambulance facilities are provided by a very efficient St. John Ambulance Brigade and have been thoroughly satisfactory.

Home Nursing. One district nurse-midwife is provided by the local hospital (subsidised by the local authority). No occasion has arisen for the provision of any extra home nursing.

Centres and Clinics. There are no treatment clinics other than the Scabies clinic (q.v.). The M. & C. W. clinic holds sessions every Wednesday afternoon and is under the care of the Health Visitor and a staff of voluntary lady-helpers; a doctor attends every session and sees local and evacuated persons on alternate Wednesdays. There is one whole-time Health Visitor for residents and a part-time visitor for evacuees. All children under 5 are also visited at their houses. The Health Visitors also distribute cod-liver oil and fruit juices at the clinic on specified days.

Hospitals. There is one small voluntary hospital with about 20 beds for general cases and a maternity ward of 15 beds. The hospital is subsidised by the local authority. There is also a Public Assistance Infirmary with 50 beds.

Diphtheria Prophylaxis. The Council continues to provide the means for all children under 15 to be immunised free of cost, those under 5 at the M. & C. W. clinic and over 5 at the schools. Too much importance cannot be attached to the whole-hearted co-operation of the masters and mistresses of the schools in this connection - it is largely due to their help that 95% of the school children have been inoculated. Over 80% of the under 5's have also been protected.

Scabies Clinics. The child clinic, provided by the Ministry, for scabies and impetigo was closed early in the year for lack of cases. The adult clinic for scabies, provided and maintained by the local authority, is open each week one day for men and one day for women. A few of the surrounding rural areas have joined in the maintenance of the clinic. During the year 96 cases were treated, of which 64 were from the Urban area and 32 from the neighbouring districts.

Health Service Officers:-

- 1 Medical Officer of Health (part-time)
- 1 Sanitary Inspector (whole-time)
- 1 Health Visitor (whole-time)
- 1 " " for evacuees (part-time)

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water. The public supply is obtained from a number of wells sunk in drift gravel beds situated 8 to 10 miles away. The quality has been uniformly good during the year except on one occasion in January, when 3 individual wells were found to be suspicious. Subsequent samples over a period of weekly tests were satisfactory. Samples from the pipe supply showed the following results:-

	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Chemical	3	0
Bacteriological	14	4

There was very little rise in the water level during the Winter of 1942/3 owing to the low rainfall and heavy consumption. A scheme for an additional borehole well in the gravel beds to enable further proved supplies to be tapped, as mentioned in the previous year's report, was submitted to the Ministry of Health early in 1943. Unfortunately the conditions imposed by the Ministry were such that the cost of including them was considered by the Council to be prohibitive and the proposal was not proceeded with. In consequence there was a gradual worsening of the position all through the year and this became serious by the end of the Summer. Despite intensive propaganda and strict economy, the position became critical at 30th October, 1943. The Engineer states that after consultation with other Officers concerned, it was decided to bring into operation the emergency scheme (see previous year's report) whereby water from the River Welland could be filtered and chlorinated by the Public Baths' plant and pumped into the public mains. This has been regularly in operation since the date mentioned, and although the quantity is limited by the capacity of the pool and the time required to obtain a clear report of a sample of water from each filling from the County Medical Officer's laboratory, it has been of great assistance in balancing the gradual diminution of the supply from the main source.

During the last two years, a complete survey of the water sources in the district has been made by the Engineer, and a scheme for a large new and additional supply is now being considered by the Council with a view to its submission to the Ministry of Health.

Thirty-five samples of water from private wells were examined for the presence of pollution. One well was found to be contaminated by surface water. Structural improvements were carried out and after several pumpings subsequent samples proved the water to be satisfactory. Fifty seven houses derive their supply from 25 private wells, and the remainder are connected to the public pipe supply.

A copy of the result of the analysis and report of the Leicestershire County Council, dated 4th December, 1943, regarding the last sample from the town main, is appended:-

Appearance in 2 foot tube	Clear
Odour	Nil
Reaction.	Alkaline
Hardness.	54 degrees (very hard)
	Parts per 100,000
Free and Saline Ammonia.. ...	0.002
Albuminoid Ammonia... ..	0.001
Chlorine in Chlorides	1.0
(Equal to Chloride of Sodium) ...	1.65
Nitrogen in Nitrates.	Nil
Oxygen absorbed in 4 hours... ..	---
Coliform organisms in 10 c.c.s....	Absent
Remarks: This sample is quite satisfactory.	

Drainage and Sewerage. No extensions have been made to these systems during the year. Progress has been made with a scheme for the gradual overhaul and modernization of the sewage disposal works.

Closet Accommodation. There are approximately 4,108 water closets in the area, and these are connected to the town sewerage system, while a few outlying properties are provided with sanitary accommodation of the conservancy type.

Public Cleansing. Metal dustbins are in use at all house properties for the storage of domestic refuse, and a system is in operation whereby the refuse collectors notify the Health Department of instances where dustbins are in need of renewal. Owners of the properties concerned are thereupon notified of the fact. As far as

possible a weekly collection of domestic refuse and salvaged materials is maintained. During the year, the quantity received at the Destructor Depot was 2,336 tons, of which the following materials were salvaged:-

	Tons	Cwts.	Qrs.
Paper	65	3	0
Metal	62	0	2
Textiles	12	4	0
Bottles & Jars... ..	4	9	0
Bones	10	9	0
Rubber... ..	2	7	0
	<u>156</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>2</u>

In comparison with the salvage figures of the previous year, there has been a drop of 81 tons, chiefly owing to a decrease in the quantity of paper, metal and rubber received.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

Complaints received and investigated	211
Defects or nuisances dealt with	383
Informal notices served	193
Statutory notices served	0

Inspections.

	1st Visits	Re-visits
Dwelling-houses (all purposes)	322	413
Tents, vans etc. (human habitation).	2	1
Regional Slaughter-house	1	301
Food premises... ..	88	223
Dairies and cowsheds	16	97
Offensive trades	3	0
Animal keeping	35	2
Factories etc.	64	18
Shops... ..	37	9
Other premises..	<u>171</u>	<u>191</u>
	<u>739</u>	<u>1255</u>

Dwelling-houses.

General structural repairs effected	39
Drains and sanitary fittings repaired or new provided... ..	57
Dustbins provided... ..	52
Cleansing and other defects remedied	26
Licences issued under Defence Regulation 68 A... ..	2

Factories etc.

Defective sanitary accommodation remedied	3
New sanitary accommodation provided... ..	1
Drains and other matters attended to	6
Matters referred by H. M. Inspector	6

Shops.

Sanitary convenience provided... ..	1
Sanitary convenience repaired... ..	1
Means of heating improved... ..	1
Other defects remedied	3

Miscellaneous nuisances.

Drainage defects repaired... ..	5
Drains and fittings tested... ..	7
Offensive accumulations removed	12
Dangerous structures made safe	5
Animal keeping nuisances abated	3
Other defects remedied	16

Disinfection and Disinfestation.

Infected rooms fumigated	56
Verminous rooms treated	213
Articles of bedding, clothing etc.:-	
Steam disinfected	1160
Destroyed	9
Other articles disinfected	497
Number of instances of bug infestation:-	
Council houses	3
Other houses	7

Special classes of premises and occupations subject to control.

Written consent to establishment of trade of Rag & Bone Dealer renewed	1
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Petrol and Carbide Stores.

	Petroleum Spirit	Carbide of Calcium
Number of Licences issued	1	0
Number of Licences renewed	30	1
Number of contraventions rectified	6	0

Swimming Bath. The Council's covered swimming pool is equipped with a Paterson filtering, chlorination and aerating plant, which has operated satisfactorily throughout the Summer season. One sample of the water was submitted for examination on July 8th and the report stated "Coliform organisms absent from 10 c.c.s. Plate culture sterile."

Rats and Mice Destruction. As directed by the Ministry of Food under the Infestation Order 1943, a Survey of the district was undertaken during July with the object of ascertaining the presence of any major infestations of rats or mice as defined by the Ministry. The result of the Survey revealed that the infestations encountered were scattered and of a minor nature, and premises generally were under good control. A report on these lines was accordingly forwarded to the Ministry.

Two employees of the Council attended in Leicester a short course of instruction in methods of destroying rodents, under arrangements made by the Ministry of Food, with a view to assisting in the Campaign as occasion requires.

Upon the recommendation of the Leicestershire Urban District Council's Association, application was made to the Leicestershire County Council for the delegation of their powers and duties under the Rats and Mice Destruction Act 1919 to this Council, and consequently the transfer of these powers was effected on August 3rd, and the Council's Sanitary Inspector was appointed Rats Officer under the Act on September 7th.

Various meetings of representatives of Local Authorities in the County and of the Ministry of Food took place with a view to ensuring the co-operation of adjoining districts by the formation of "workable areas" consisting of groups of Local Authorities. This Council finally decided to investigate the advisability of joining with the Market Harborough Rural District Council in the appointment of a full-time Rats Officer for the two areas.

Co-operation has been maintained also with the Divisional Rodent Officers of the Ministry of Food and the County Pests Officer of the War Agricultural Executive Committee, in so far as their respective duties are concerned.

On December 8th, the Ministry of Food served directions upon the Council under the Infestations Order 1943, to proceed with the work of rats and mice destruction in the district.

The following infestations have been dealt with during the year:-

	Rats	Mice
Prior to September 7th	29	4
From September 8th to December 9th	71	9
From December 10th to 31st	4	3

Of these 120 infestations, 12 were classified as "medium" and 108 "minor" in extent.

All land and premises owned or occupied by the Council received regular attention throughout the year, and 1152 poison baits were placed in manholes of the town sewerage system during the early part of November.

HOUSING.

The Health Committee gave serious consideration to Circular 2828A from the Ministry of Health regarding the repair and maintenance of buildings, particularly in view of the difficulty experienced in obtaining the prompt repair of the more urgent types of defects in houses. The Council's Surveyor and Sanitary Inspector were deputed to interview the builders in the district for the purpose of obtaining particulars of their staffs and amount of work outstanding. It appeared that a large proportion of the firms consisted of a masterman only and that many of the mastermen and operatives were elderly and could not undertake roof and similar repairs, while other firms were engaged on priority work. The matter was placed before the Ministry of Works, with the result that there has been a slight improvement in the situation. Although builders still have a considerable amount of work in arrears, it has been possible in most instances for defects of an urgent nature to be attended to, although in some cases there has been a certain amount of delay.

No new houses have been erected during the year.

1. Inspection of Dwelling Houses during the year.

- | | |
|--|-----|
| (1) (a) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) | 156 |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose | 285 |
| (2) (a) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925 and 1932 | - |
| (b) Number of inspections made for the purpose | - |
| (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation | - |
| (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation. | 39 |

2. Remedy of defects during the year without Service of Formal Notices.

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers	34
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3. Action under Statutory Powers during the year.

Nil

4. Housing Act, 1936 - Part IV - Overcrowding.

A shortage of housing accommodation under prevailing conditions is very apparent, and very little can be done at the present time to relieve the situation. Preparations are being made and schemes are under consideration for dealing with the matter when practicable.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.Milk Supply:-

<u>Trade.</u>	<u>No. on Register.</u>
Cowkeepers only	2
Retailers only	4
Retailers and cowkeepers	7
Farms and other premises	21

The following licences have been issued under the Milk (Special Designations) Orders 1936 and 1938:

"Pasteurised" Milk	1
do. - Supplementary (Retailing)	1
"Tuberculin Tested (Certified)" - Dealer's	1
do. - Dealer's Bottling	1

Milk Sampling:-

<u>Class</u>	<u>Number of samples taken for bacteriological examinations</u>	<u>Number satisfactory</u>	<u>Number Unsatisfactory</u>
"Pasteurised"	5	5	0
Ordinary	24	24	0
	<u>29</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>0</u>

Sampling has been limited mainly to producer-retailers, in accordance with the Ministry of Health Circular 2761. The fact that all of the 24 samples tested were satisfactory reflects great credit upon the methods of production adopted by the producer-retailers concerned.

Nine complaints of dirty or souring milk were received chiefly during the Summer, and these were all investigated. Where practicable, the premises and methods were inspected and advice given. In some cases the cause was attributed to difficulties of transport, but in most cases an improvement was effected.

Four contraventions of the Milk and Dairies Order were rectified.

Meat and Other Foods.

A total of 9,085 animals were slaughtered during the year at the Regional Slaughter-house, which serves the town and adjoining rural areas. Routine examination of all meat was carried out before distribution and the amount condemned as unfit for human consumption was 12 tons 12 cwt. 2 qrs. 2lbs.

Slaughter of Animals Act, 1933.

Licences issued	4
Licences renewed	16

Carcases Inspected and Condemned.

	Cattle excluding Cows.	Cows.	Calves.	Sheep and Lambs.	Pigs.
Number killed and inspected	978	201	181	7638	87
All diseases except Tuberculosis:					
Whole carcasses condemned	4	2	4	54	-
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	151	53	8	285	10
Percentage of the number inspected affected with disease other than Tuberculosis	15.8	27.3	6.6	4.4	11.5
Tuberculosis only:					
Whole carcasses condemned	11	7	-	-	-
Carcasses of which some part or organ was condemned	98	28	-	-	3
Percentage of the number inspected affected with Tuberculosis	11.1	17.4	-	-	3.4

Ninety requests to inspect doubtful foodstuffs of many varieties were complied with, including several large consignments of damaged goods. A total of 8,307½ lbs. was found on examination to be unfit for human food, of which a large proportion was utilised for other purposes in accordance with the directions of the Salvage Department of the Ministry of Food.

Five defects were remedied at premises where food is kept or prepared for sale.

Infectious Diseases.

Scarlet Fever ...	5	Erysipelas ...	3
Whooping Cough...	1	Measles... ..	131
Diphtheria ...	0	Pneumonia ...	12
		Puerperal	
		Pyrexia.	0

Tuberculosis. Two new cases of pulmonary tuberculosis were notified - 1 male and 1 female - and four non-pulmonary. The deaths from tuberculosis were 4 male and 4 female, pulmonary, and 1 male non-pulmonary.

Yours faithfully,

CHARLES T. SCOTT,

Medical Officer of Health.

BERNARD G. ELLIOTT,

Sanitary Inspector.

Vital Statistics - 1943
(Not for publication)

Total population 10,400

		Total.	Male.	Female.
Live Births	(Legitimate	175	90	85
	(Illegitimate	<u>9</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>4</u>
		<u>184</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>89</u>
Still Births	(Legitimate	5	5	0
	(Illegitimate	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>
		<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>
Deaths under one year	(Legitimate	6	5	1
	(Illegitimate	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
		<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>
Deaths..		109	44	65

			<u>England & Wales</u>
Birth-rate (per 1000 population):	17.7	(1942 - 16.5)	<u>1943.</u> <u>15.8</u>
Death-rate	"	" : 10.5	(1942 - 11.0) 15.0
Infant death-rate	(per 1000 live-births):	32.5	(1942 - 39.6) 58.0

